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Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Letter dated 28 February 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 21 February 2011, from His Excellency Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabr Al-Thani, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar, in connection with the HOPEFOR initiative to improve the use of military and civil defence assets in humanitarian response (see annex).

I would appreciate it if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 69 (a).

(*Signed*) Nassir Abdulaziz **Al-Nasser**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 28 February 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

As the 2004 tsunami that devastated South-East Asia and the recent earthquake and floods in Haiti and Pakistan have demonstrated, there has been an increase in the magnitude, frequency and complexity of natural disasters. Those disasters are being compounded by climate change, degradation of the environment and rapid urbanization.

Typically, military and civil defence assets are called upon to distribute relief in emergencies, and those assets certainly have an important role to play in the aftermath of disasters. At the same time, however, questions have been raised about the ways in which those assets have been employed, particularly from a human rights perspective.

Drawing on lessons learned from recent disaster relief operations, the Government of the State of Qatar has proposed the HOPEFOR initiative, which was launched in June 2010 at the International Peace Institute in New York. Its goal is to initiate discussion on the use of military assets in emergencies and identify more effective ways of using those assets while fully respecting humanitarian principles.

Over the past few months, the State of Qatar has held in-depth consultations with a wide range of stakeholders in order further to refine the HOPEFOR initiative. Please find enclosed the initial background paper that emerged from those consultations. It is entitled "HOPEFOR initiative: a global cooperative framework to improve the effectiveness of military and civil defence assets in relief operations". It was prepared by the State of Qatar, with support from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

The HOPEFOR initiative will support the best options identified in that background paper for enhancing the use of military assets for disaster assistance. It will start by promoting the establishment of a global network of civilian and military emergency relief practitioners. It will also work to strengthen regional and subregional arrangements, including through the creation of a humanitarian-military centre of excellence.

The State of Qatar would now like to involve other Member States in the continued development and implementation of those options. Towards that end, we plan to submit a draft resolution to the United Nations General Assembly that would welcome reflection on how to improve the use of military and civil defence assets for disaster relief and welcome the HOPEFOR initiative.

The draft resolution will also include mention of our intention to conduct consultations at the expert level and to convene an international conference for a wider group of States and interested governmental and non-governmental parties to discuss progress achieved to this point, the way forward, and recommendations on implementation options in cooperation with the United Nations.

We should be most grateful for the support of Member States of the United Nations, in view of the need for concrete action to improve the international response to natural disasters.

(*Signed*) Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabr **Al-Thani**
Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs

Enclosure

Initial background paper

HOPEFOR initiative: a global cooperative framework to improve the effectiveness of military and civil defence assets in relief operations

The HOPEFOR initiative aims at improving the use of military and civil defence assets (MCDA) in relief operations. As humanitarian needs grow, MCDA are often called upon to support and supplement relief efforts, and they have an important contribution to make. However, recent experience has brought to light certain shortfalls and gaps in their use. The goal of the HOPEFOR initiative is to address those gaps and to improve civil-military coordination in support of the United Nations humanitarian emergency response system for large-scale natural disasters.

The initiative was launched by His Excellency Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabr Al-Thani, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar in New York in June 2010 at the International Peace Institute. That was followed by in-depth consultations with a wide range of stakeholders to further refine the initiative and propose concrete deliverables.

With that in mind, this paper identifies a series of options to increase the effectiveness of humanitarian civil-military coordination and the use of MCDA in relief operations. The HOPEFOR initiative intends to support efforts to further develop and implement these options. As a first step, the initiative might establish a global network of civilian and military practitioners, drawn from both assisting and affected States. It would also promote regional and subregional arrangements, including through the creation of a humanitarian-military centre of excellence in Doha.

Introduction

1. In the coming decades, the number of humanitarian crises is likely to increase as continued and protracted complex emergencies and global challenges exacerbate existing or create new humanitarian needs. In addition, partly because of climate change, natural disasters are predicted to become more frequent and more serious. This development raises the question of how local, national, regional and international capacities for preparedness and response to natural disasters can be strengthened. The major challenge to improving response effectiveness is how to develop regional and subregional mechanisms to assist and expedite neighbour-to-neighbour assistance, especially when foreign MCDA are involved.

2. While domestic military forces have as a rule taken a leading role in responding to natural disasters affecting their own countries, recently there has been a marked increase in the deployment of foreign military forces to support international humanitarian efforts and assist countries affected by large-scale natural disasters. For more than a decade, international military forces have increasingly

been activated to respond to major natural disaster events around the world. In most cases, these military forces have played an effective and necessary role in the overall response, exemplified in the responses to Hurricane Mitch (1998), flooding in Mozambique (2000 and 2001), the Asian tsunami (2004), the Pakistan earthquake (2005), and most recently the Haiti earthquake (2010) and the Pakistan floods (2010). In all those cases, foreign military assets were provided either bilaterally, or under the auspices of a larger organizational structure such as the Caribbean Community, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization or the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and deployed upon the explicit request of the host country. In all probability, military actors will continue to play an important role in responding to large-scale natural disasters in the future. While a number of measures have been taken to make such efforts more effective and efficient, there is still much that needs to be done to improve the ways in which international military contingents complement the efforts of the international relief community.

3. In order to establish principles for the provision of military support for disaster relief and facilitate coordination between humanitarian and military actors, the Guidelines on the Use of Foreign Military and Civil-Defence Assets in Disaster Relief (Oslo Guidelines) were published in 1994. Some 45 countries and 25 organizations took part in the original drafting of the guidelines. Humanitarian actors have long acknowledged that the use of MCDA in disaster response can contribute to overall humanitarian efforts, as long as certain key military principles are respected and taken into account. The Oslo Guidelines provide key definitions and principles on the use of foreign military assets, including the following:

(a) "MCDA should be employed by UN humanitarian agencies as a last resort, i.e. only in the absence of any other available civilian alternative to support urgent humanitarian needs in the time required." (Oslo Guidelines, paragraph 32 (ii)). The concept of last resort is further expanded on as follows: "Military and civil defence assets should be seen as a tool complementing existing relief mechanisms in order to provide specific support to specific requirements. ... Therefore, foreign military and civil defence assets should be requested only where there is no comparable civilian alternative and only the use of military or civil defence assets can meet a critical humanitarian need. The military or civil defence asset must therefore be unique in capability and availability. However, foreign civil protection assets, when civilian in nature and respecting humanitarian principles, can provide an important direct and indirect contribution to humanitarian actions based on humanitarian needs assessments and their possible advantages in terms of speed, specialization, efficiency and effectiveness, especially in the early phase of relief response. The use of civil protection assets should be needs driven, complementary to and coherent with humanitarian aid operations, respecting the overall coordinating role of the UN." (Oslo Guidelines, paragraph 5);

(b) Humanitarian assistance must be provided in accordance with the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence, as provided for by United Nations General Assembly resolutions 46/182 and 58/114 (cf. Oslo Guidelines, paragraph 20);

(c) "The sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of States must be fully respected in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. In this context, humanitarian assistance should be provided with the consent of the affected country

and in principle on the basis of appeal by the affected country" (Oslo Guidelines, paragraph 21);

(d) "As a matter of principle, the military and civil defence assets of forces that may be perceived as belligerents or of units that find themselves actively engaged in combat in the affected country or region shall not be used to support UN humanitarian activities." (Oslo Guidelines, paragraph 23).

4. Owing to the increased frequency and severity of natural disasters, efforts have been made to enhance the effectiveness of foreign military assets engaged in disaster response operations. Considerable work has been done to build military response capacity, train humanitarian and military actors in coordination, and capture best practices from individual operations. Central to this effort has been the Civil-Military Coordination Section of OCHA, and in particular the United Nations humanitarian civil-military coordination programme, as well as the work of numerous national militaries in capturing lessons learned from recent operations such as those in Haiti, Mozambique and other places.

5. Experience has demonstrated that military assets provide the greatest utility in supporting disaster-relief operations through the deployment of specific capacities to address specific requirements. Useful resources include rotary-wing and tactical aircraft for airlifts; engineering assets for restoring infrastructure, including clearing rubble from roads, rebuilding bridges and repairing damage to air and seaports; medical support, including trauma medicine; water purification; and where appropriate, security. The provision of such capacities is in keeping with the Oslo Guidelines, which have a clear preference for indirect support and infrastructure support over direct support from military actors. These assets can leverage the capacities of the humanitarian community, and, in the early stages of large-scale disasters, quickly provide additional resources to reduce the imbalance between needs and resources, and thus help to close the humanitarian gap. These lessons, however, have been applied inconsistently in subsequent response operations.

6. In the past, several initiatives to close the humanitarian gap have proposed the establishment of formed units. However, recent experiences have demonstrated the complexity of such an option, and have made it clear that other innovative ways need to be developed to ensure effective use of MCDA for a more reliable and timely response to natural disasters when and where needed.

Identified gaps and challenges

7. There are numerous issues within the existing civil-military coordination framework that need to be addressed to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the deployment of foreign military forces in natural-disaster response operations. These gaps are related to the capacities and capabilities of the humanitarian community, foreign military units, and the ability of affected States effectively to integrate the response assets. For affected States, this deficiency can be largely offset by the development and implementation of effective disaster-response plans and capacities, as demonstrated in the response to the flooding in Mozambique in 2000 and 2001, and the Haiti hurricane response in 2004. However, the gaps are generally not related to the numbers and availability of foreign military troops that are deployed to natural-disaster response operations. The problems largely stem from an inability rapidly to deploy the assets that are required; the wrong types of military assets being deployed; ineffective civil-military coordination structures;

lack of military training or experience in disaster-response operations; and poor transition from military to civilian assets. Some of the identified gaps in civil-military coordination and United Nations MCDA capacity-building include, but are not limited to the following:

- Lack of rapid and comprehensive assessment information to identify priorities, needs, and requirements so that national and international assistance efforts, including the use of military assets, can be better directed to the greatest effect (recent experience has demonstrated that there are often too many or unnecessary military assets deployed, and many of these assets remain idle or engage in activities that are not conducive to the most effective response on the ground);
- Lack of predictability in the number and types of military assets that will be provided (the United Nations MCDA directory is inefficient since it is not updated by asset providers and requesting procedures are too bureaucratic, and in practice, assets are identified through direct requests, regional networks and personal contacts);
- Lack of a common operational picture that can be shared among all actors responding to the disaster;
- Lack of consistently effective coordination structures on the ground, such as civil-military operations centres, humanitarian operations centres and joint operations centres;
- Inability to share information effectively and consistently between humanitarian and military actors;
- Difficulties in establishing a "pull" rather than "push" system that effectively and efficiently matches the requirements and gaps identified on the ground with appropriate military assets and capacities;
- Lack of effective training and doctrine for military forces deployed in disaster-response operations;
- Difficulties in identifying effective benchmarks, evaluation criteria, and triggers for transition from military to civilian assets;
- Insufficient numbers of trained and equipped civil-military coordination officers that reflect the geographical and linguistic diversity that is increasingly required;
- Lack of an adequate roster of trained, equipped and readily deployable civil-military coordination officers;
- Lack of a dedicated repository of lessons learned and best practices to guide decision and policymaking.

Preliminary global options to enhance effectiveness[1]

8. Based on the above non-exhaustive list of gaps, the following global options have been preliminarily identified within the MCDA and humanitarian communities as possible ways to increase the effectiveness of civil-military coordination and improve the use of MCDA in disaster response. The HOPEFOR initiative will strive to move forward with refining and implementing some of the options listed below:

(a) Dedicated and specialized training for military forces engaged in disaster response: With formal disaster-response missions increasingly being assigned to national military forces, specialized training is required to make the use of MCDA more effective and less ad hoc than in the past. The provision of specifically trained liaison officers could facilitate real-time information-sharing between deployed military assets and humanitarian actors. Ideally, this training would also include the capacity to train humanitarian actors to work more effectively with military forces. One potential option is establishing one or more training centres to fill this gap, preferably at the regional or subregional level. This initiative should also identify effective implementation tools, such as training of trainers, to ensure the broadest possible reach (both foreign and domestic forces);

(b) Development of military doctrine, best practices, tactics, techniques, procedures, and policies to support and guide both civilian and military actors in disaster-response operations: The need for this stems from the lack of such military training for dedicated disaster-response units in national armed forces. While some individual Member States have developed policies, primarily at the national level, this has not translated into supporting doctrine, best practices, or tactics, techniques and procedures for military actors. One of the goals of this initiative would be the adoption and dissemination of policies that support the existing guidelines (concepts and principles) at the national level. A key component of this initiative would be the creation of a formal platform for the sharing of lessons learned and best practices, as well as for bringing the Oslo Guidelines into the mainstream of military and humanitarian doctrine. Such a platform would both complement and inform the training initiative. Both the training and doctrine development initiatives would assist Member States with international deployments as well as domestic response capacity;

(c) Creation of a global pool of trained and equipped civilian civil-military coordination officers that would take into account the need for geographic and linguistic diversity: These officers would be trained in the various existing guidelines and best practices for the purpose of deploying in various response operations throughout the world. While OCHA has established a pool of trained civil-military coordination officers, requirements on the ground often outstrip capacities. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee on Post-War and Disaster Reconstruction and Rehabilitation stresses that civil-military coordination is the shared responsibility of all actors. Such a pool of civil-military coordination officers should be available across the humanitarian and military communities. One potential approach would be the establishment of a global pool of trained and equipped civil-military coordination officers, similar to the pool of trained disaster managers that

[1] All initiatives are predicated on an identified and requested need for international MCDA. The use of international military assets would be based on the unique nature of the MCDA, either in timeliness or capability, and would be used to temporarily fill an identified gap in the humanitarian response.

the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination system is able to call upon;

(d) Creation of a more effective, predictable, and rapid civil-military interface in disaster response operations (structured along the lines of civil-military operations centres, humanitarian operations centres, humanitarian assistance coordination centres or the Joint Operations and Tasking Centre) to establish effective dialogue and coordination between humanitarian and military actors early in the response: Concomitant with this would be the development and dissemination of clear guidance on managing civil-military coordination within an international response system similar to the humanitarian cluster system. That would assist in eliminating the ad hoc and parallel structures found in several previous response operations. A potential model for this would be a deployable module similar to the on-site operations coordination centre established for urban search and rescue missions;

(e) Integration of trained civil-military coordination and liaison officers into the United Nations humanitarian coordination system in the field, at the earliest possible stages of international disaster relief efforts, for instance by integrating them into the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination system: This would facilitate the establishment of a "pull" system whereby deployed assets would effectively and efficiently match identified needs and gaps;

(f) Establishment of regional and subregional agreements, standing operational procedures and model status of forces agreements for international MCDA to enhance coordination and response between neighbours (neighbours helping neighbours): A potential model for this could be the expansion and refinement of the Asia-Pacific Conference on Military Assistance to Disaster Relief Operations process;

(g) Development of innovative systems and networks to establish more effective and predictable procedures for requesting and providing MCDA and ensure a more reliable and timely response: That measure would allow a more rapid assessment of the required assets, enabling providing States to take prompt decisions. Model agreements concerning the status of MCDA could be drafted and negotiated in advance. A core element would be the introduction of benchmarks and trigger points for the deployment of MCDA in disaster relief operations. Assets could arrive within one to three days in order to meet needs in the early phase of a large-scale disaster, and could normally leave after four-six weeks, when civilian capacity had been built up;

(h) Development of global information-sharing procedures for humanitarian and military actors with a focus on open disaster-relief operations, including the sharing of assessment and analytical capability in order to take advantage of all available technologies in support of a common operational picture;

(i) Strengthening the capacity of affected States to receive and integrate foreign military assets into a centrally managed coordination structure;

(j) Creation of natural disaster response exercises in order to test the comprehensive response system. There are currently numerous military exercises responding to natural disasters. However, few include realistic scenarios or the participation of humanitarian and civilian disaster management personnel;

(k) Commissioning a thorough study with the ultimate goal of identifying gaps and making recommendations in order to enhance the effectiveness of civil-military coordination and operations. The study could complement the report entitled "Effectiveness of foreign military assets in natural disaster response", which was commissioned by OCHA and prepared by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) in 2008. It could incorporate lessons recently learned from large-scale disasters which would help to inform decision-making and policymaking, as well as formulating practical solutions to improve the effectiveness of MCDA deployment;

(l) Enhancing regional and subregional civil-military coordination so as to reflect the work of existing centres of excellence in Hawaii and Australia, including through the establishment of a humanitarian-military centre of excellence in Doha with the following functions:

- Act as a global platform for many such initiatives, providing a regional hub for civil-military coordination, in close cooperation with existing mechanisms and procedures;
- Serve as a civil-military focal point and hub in support of natural disaster response throughout the region;
- Collect and share best practices and lessons learned among regional stakeholders, who would ideally hold high-level meetings in the region at least once a year;
- Train military forces and humanitarian actors on best practices in disaster response operations;
- Act as a source of information and expertise in the development of regional and national policies for the effective use of military assets;
- Develop regional and subregional military-military and civil-military agreements, standard operating procedures and networks in order to enhance overall regional capacities;
- Maintain a database of trained regional civil-military coordination officers who could be deployed in support of regional and national response operations. The database could also be used to support the Civil-Military Coordination Section of OCHA at the global level as necessary;
- Provide linkage with other early-warning and preparedness activities in the region; and
- Act as a model for other regions and subregions to establish similar centres in order to create a global network.

The HOPEFOR initiative alone would not necessarily take forward all the options listed; all relevant stakeholders would take part, and there would be close cooperation with the Consultative Group on the use of MCDA. The HOPEFOR initiative is, however, intended to support efforts to develop, refine and implement some of those options.

Objective of the HOPEFOR initiative

9. In making effective use of military assets, the challenge has often been not so much a lack of forces available for deployment, but rather how to provide the appropriate and necessary forces, equipment and capabilities. Many relevant lessons have been learned and documented, for instance in the 2008 SIPRI report entitled "Effectiveness of foreign military assets in natural disaster response". While it would be useful to update such lessons, the greatest challenge is to apply the lessons already learned to future relief operations and to create the political will to make better use of existing instruments and assets.

10. The purpose of the HOPEFOR initiative is therefore to improve civil-military coordination in the United Nations relief system and to ensure more effective use of MCDA in responses to natural disasters. The objectives of the initiative are as follows:

- Enhance the capacity of the United Nations to assess and identify priorities and needs, including in the use of military assets;
- Improve the ability of affected States to effectively integrate the assets deployed;
- Strengthen cooperation with existing regional arrangements and provide a framework for regional and global coordination;
- Develop innovative ways to build structured and predictable United Nations MCDA capacities for immediate humanitarian emergency relief in response to large-scale natural disasters;
- Improve training for MCDA providers, raise awareness of the Oslo Guidelines and promote their implementation;
- Increase cross-cultural understanding between humanitarian and military disaster relief providers.

11. The HOPEFOR initiative would support and complement the current international humanitarian response structure, while ensuring that it does not duplicate, compete with or hinder any new initiative in terms of financial assets, personnel or attention. The HOPEFOR initiative would be fully committed to the fundamental humanitarian principles of impartiality, neutrality, independence and assistance based on need alone, and to the Oslo Guidelines on MCDA, particularly the principle of last resort in the use of foreign MCDA.

Way forward

12. In pursuit of its objectives, the HOPEFOR initiative would promote regional and subregional arrangements by establishing a humanitarian-military centre of excellence in accordance with option 8 (l) listed above. Extensive experience and the collection of best practices have shown that regional and subregional arrangements often allow the most effective use of MCDA in assisting countries affected by natural disasters. The reasons include timeliness, proximity, political will and cultural and linguistic similarities among neighbouring States. It is thus possible to build on the principle that neighbours help one another.

13. In parallel, the HOPEFOR initiative would, at an initial stage, encourage the establishment of a global network of civilian and military practitioners from both assisting and affected States. The network could be based on such models as the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) and the Consultative Group on the use of MCDA.

14. In addition to those steps, other measures from among the broad options set forth above could be considered in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

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Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: special economic assistance to individual countries or regions

Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the wake of devastating floods in Pakistan

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted to the General Assembly in compliance with its request contained in resolution 64/294 entitled "Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the wake of devastating floods in Pakistan". The report describes the impact of the disaster, focusing on the humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction assistance supplied by the United Nations and its partners. It also describes some of the critical humanitarian challenges as well as efforts in disaster risk reduction and preparedness.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted to the General Assembly in compliance with its request contained in resolution 64/294 of 19 August 2010 and covers the period from August 2010 to February 2011.

II. Emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the wake of the devastating floods in Pakistan

A. The Disaster

2. Over the course of the 2010 monsoon season, in July and August 2010, Pakistan experienced the worst floods in its history, with the Indus River bursting its banks and inundating vast areas of the country. Heavy rainfall caused flash floods in the north and north-western regions. The high-intensity rainfall in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa generated unprecedented flood peaks in the Swat River. These floods severely damaged one major irrigation structure and washed away another. The combined flow of the Swat and Kabul Rivers generated another unprecedented flood peak at Nowshera town, causing severe damage. The flood waters travelled downstream through the barrages in Punjab and Sindh until they reached the Arabian Sea downstream of Kotri Barrage. Extreme high floods were recorded at the Chasma and Taunsa Barrages, and a near-historic flood peak was also recorded at Kotri Barrage. Many of the main irrigation canals that take water from the Indus River were also flooded, pouring water onto agricultural lands. This situation was compounded by additional heavy rains, and the breaching of major canals and embankments and diversion of the water in an attempt to prevent flooding of the urban areas.

Affected population

3. The floods affected 78 out of a total of 141 districts in Pakistan, covering one third of its geographical area and more than 18 million people (one tenth of Pakistan's population), and devastated villages across the entire country, from the Himalayas to the Arabian Sea. An estimated area of 50,000 square kilometres (km) was ravaged, 2.2 million hectares of standing crops were destroyed and half a million livestock were lost. There were 1,980 deaths confirmed, and 1.7 million homes and 10,000 schools damaged or destroyed. Seven weeks after heavy rainfall and flash floods had claimed their first victims in the north-western province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, flood waves continued to devastate the southern province of Sindh before flood waters reached the Arabian Sea. Six months after the disaster, there are still areas covered with stagnant water in Sindh province, awaiting evaporation when the temperatures rise in the spring and summer. While it is estimated that the vast majority of flood-affected displaced people have returned to their areas of origin in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab, there are still about 170,000 people living in camps, 75 per cent of whom are in Sindh and the rest in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This figure does not include those facing secondary displacement: in many cases, people continue to depend on emergency shelter after having returned to their areas of origin only to find their homes and crops destroyed.

4. The province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has had to respond to multiple emergencies since 2008. As a consequence of the existing displacements the resources of the flood-affected districts of the province (constituting either areas of displacement or areas of origin) had already been stretched at the time of the disaster. There were 1.2 million internally displaced persons in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at the time of the floods.

Damage to infrastructure

5. Flash floods and landslides triggered by the rain caused severe damage to infrastructure. In the north-western part of the country, many villages and bridges were washed away entirely. Urban centres were flooded and thousands of acres of crops and agricultural lands were damaged, with major soil erosion in some areas. The overall reconstruction cost associated with the floods has been estimated in the November 2010 Preliminary Damage and Needs Assessment (compiled at the request of the Government of Pakistan by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank) at between US$ 6.799 billion and US$ 8.915 billion.

Impact on economy and livelihoods

6. The floods have increased pre-existing chronic vulnerabilities. A 2008 United Nations joint assessment estimated that 45 million people were severely food-insecure and almost 40 per cent of children were underweight. Enrolment in official aid schemes is dependent on possession of a national identity card, but its issuance has been patchy, and more men than women have been registered (98 per cent of men versus 71.2 per cent of women). The National Database and Registration Authority confirms that the registration of informal dwellers, including in the flood-affected areas, is lagging behind. The fact that Pakistan has also been host for the past 30 years to about 1.7 million registered Afghan refugees adds to the pressure for resources. The floods have further stretched the capacity of the Government of Pakistan to respond.

7. According to United Nations estimations, some of the direct implications of the floods may be: millions of additional undernourished people, millions of workers affected, a drop in primary school enrolment and survival rate, an increase in child mortality due to exposure to the elements, malaria (due to destruction of health facilities), dengue fever (in urban centres) and tuberculosis prevalence (due to poor living conditions and malnutrition), destruction of forest cover (which results in exposure of the population to more disasters in the future) and compromised water and sanitation systems (which increase the risk of water-borne diseases). There may also be a longer-term economic impact.

B. Humanitarian response

8. At the request of the Government of Pakistan, the international community stepped in to support the national response efforts. The scale of the disaster created by the floods of 2010 was such that no Government could have managed alone.

9. The response of the Government of Pakistan has been organized at the federal, provincial and district levels. The overall leadership for donor coordination rests with the Economic Affairs Division of the Ministry of Finance, whereas the National Disaster Management Authority is responsible for overall coordination of

disaster response efforts by both the Government and the international community. The National Disaster Management Authority works closely with federal ministries, Government departments, the armed forces, United Nations organizations and donors in mobilizing, receiving and deploying relief goods. It is also the coordination body for logistic operations in support of the relief efforts. The United Nations has closely coordinated its activities at federal level with the Authority.

10. At the federal level, the National Disaster Management Authority acts in consultation with the Humanitarian Coordinator and the Humanitarian Country Team. At provincial level, the humanitarian community works through the Provincial Disaster Management Authorities, most of which have been reinforced through the creation of humanitarian coordination centres and provincial/area hubs (including in Hyderabad, Multan, Peshawar, Quetta and Sukkur) and deployment of more than 50 cluster coordinators. Coordination at the district level is of critical importance, given the close contact that District Coordination Officers maintain with both response operations and beneficiaries. At all levels, coordination was strengthened through the cluster approach, with the first roll out of the clusters in Punjab and Sindh. There are 12 clusters: agriculture, camp management and camp coordination, coordination, community restoration, education, food, health, logistics, nutrition, protection, shelter and non-food items, and water/sanitation and hygiene; and four sub-clusters: child protection, mass communication, gender task force and gender-based violence.

11. In the provinces, response activities come under the overall leadership of provincial chief ministers. Provincial governments are made up of various line departments; provincial administrations are headed by chief secretaries; and provincial disaster management authorities play a critical role as interfaces for the humanitarian community. District-level administrations are led by district coordination officers; under them are executive district officers who are responsible for district-level line departments. At the provincial and district levels, the United Nations coordinates with these authorities. Clusters are co-chaired by the United Nations and provincial line departments.

12. Communities played a crucial role in saving lives in the initial stages of the calamity. With their knowledge of the yearly monsoon flooding, locals had been aware early on that the level of rainfall exceeded that of a "normal" monsoon and alerted communities further south to the need to reinforce embankments and make preparations to shift to higher ground. The resilience of the people has been remarkable in these difficult times, with countless examples of mutual assistance.

13. The Pakistan armed forces were the first respondents in respect of rescue and immediate relief to the affected population. Over 20,000 Pakistan troops of the armed forces, including medical teams, dozens of helicopters, several C-130 aircraft and over 1,000 boats, were mobilized to undertake search-and-rescue operations throughout the country; and to distribute immediate relief supplies to displaced and isolated populations in the first three weeks of the emergency. Call centres were established to receive and respond to emergency calls. Simultaneous work was undertaken to strengthen banks vulnerable to floods. In some places, breaches were engineered to control floods and disrupted communication networks were quickly restored through the erection of temporary structures.

14. There were approximately 2,500 international troops deployed upon the request of the Government of Pakistan and in support of the Government's relief

efforts. The main assets provided were helicopters, field hospitals and water treatment capabilities. The National Disaster Management Authority coordinated with the Pakistani and international militaries deployed. In the provinces, the Pakistan civil administration filled a similar role.

15. The humanitarian community was led by the Humanitarian Coordinator. This position was de-linked from that of Resident Coordinator in June 2009 so as to ensure the provision of strong, dedicated leadership in respect of the internally displaced persons-related crisis in the north-western part of the country. The two positions were re-merged in December 2010.

16. At its highest levels, the United Nations exhibited its solidarity with and commitment to Pakistan with a number of high-level visits. I visited the flood-affected areas in August. Following my visit and the high-level meeting on the flood emergency at United Nations Headquarters, I came to recognize the continuing importance of the mandate of my Special Envoy for Assistance to Pakistan and in September 2010, appointed Mr. Rauf Engin Soysal to succeed Mr. Jean-Maurice Ripert in that capacity. I have asked Mr. Soysal to work closely with the Government of Pakistan in strengthening the existing partnership between the United Nations and Pakistan. The main responsibility of the Special Envoy is to oversee the coordination of international assistance to Pakistan.

17. The Emergency Relief Coordinator, Ms. Valerie Amos, chose Pakistan for her first field visit upon taking up her position in August 2010 and returned to the country in October. The Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP) visited the country in September and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in October. The Directors General of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) visited Pakistan in October for the launch of the "survival strategy". A team of experts from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) visited the cultural heritage sites damaged in the floods in October; the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[1] visited the country in November; and the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) visited in January 2011. In February 2011, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction assessed the situation on the ground first-hand; and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) visited the country as early recovery activities gained momentum. The number of visits and issues discussed demonstrate the continued commitment of the United Nations to assisting Pakistan in a comprehensive manner.

18. High-level meetings have included the 110th plenary meeting of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly, held on 19 August 2010, and the High-level Ministerial Meeting of Member States on the flood emergency in Pakistan, held on 19 September 2010. The Third Ministerial Meeting of the Friends of Democratic Pakistan, held in Brussels on 15 October 2010, dedicated part of its discussions to the floods, as did the Pakistan Development Forum held in Islamabad in November 2010.

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. ..., No. 30822.

19. The Pakistan Initial Floods Emergency Response Plan, launched on 11 August 2010, had sought US$ 459 million to respond to the immediate relief needs of flood-affected people. The Pakistan Floods Relief and Early Recovery Response Plan, launched in November 2010 and representing a revision of the Initial Plan, took into account fresh needs assessments, fluctuating beneficiary figures, and an extended planning and budgeting horizon, and in this regard, sought US$ 1.93 billion to enable international partners (United Nations organizations and non-governmental organizations) to support the Government of Pakistan in addressing the residual relief needs for 6 months and early recovery needs of flood-affected families for 12 months up to August 2011. The overarching goal of the Floods Relief Plan was to prevent excess morbidity and mortality and enable members of flood-affected communities to return to their normal lives.

20. As of 1 March 2011, the Floods Relief Plan was funded at 65.5 per cent (US$ 1.3 billion). Funding outside the appeal, which included bilateral aid programmes, private donations, in-kind donations and funding to the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, had surpassed US$ 1.1 billion.

21. United Nations organizations in Pakistan had received a total of over US$ 51 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund in 2010 — the largest amount allocated to a single country over the course of one year. The first tranche of close to US$ 10 million was allocated in April 2010 in support of vulnerable populations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. Between August and December 2010, an additional US$ 41 million was allocated for projects assisting persons affected by the devastating monsoon floods.

22. The Emergency Response Fund for Pakistan was activated in August 2010 at the onset of the floods. The aim of the Fund was to cover emergency requirements in areas where there were gaps in humanitarian response by providing United Nations organizations and non-governmental organizations with the rapid and flexible funding needed to meet short-term emergency priorities of vulnerable communities. By 1 March 2011, close to US$ 29 million had been allocated to 100 projects, including those targeting flood-affected provinces.

23. As of 31 January 2011, approximately 6 million people had received food assistance in monthly rations (5 million starting in January), over 385,000 metric tons of food was distributed, 9.3 million people had essential medication needs covered, medical attention had been provided to nearly 10 million people, and almost 900,000 households had been provided with emergency shelter. Access to safe water was provided through rehabilitated water systems for 4.7 million people and through water trucking to 4.57 million people. Countrywide, the nutrition cluster reported that over 750,000 children under age 5 had been screened and 31,000 severely malnourished children and about 70,000 moderately malnourished children had been admitted into therapeutic programmes or feeding programmes, while 39,000 pregnant and lactating women were admitted into the supplementary feeding programmes across the country. The logistics cluster had processed 80,000 cubic metres of relief cargo, and over 11,900 metric tons of relief cargo had been airlifted, with 60 aircraft being utilized. Temporary learning centres provided education to more than 220,000 children (including 96,000 girls) and more than 400,000 children were enrolled in child-friendly spaces. A total of 1.46 million flood-affected households had been processed by the National Database and Registration Authority.

24. The international humanitarian community is only one of several actors responding to the needs of flood-affected families. In order to maximize its contribution, the Humanitarian Country Team identified early on the following as areas in which the international humanitarian community could offer a distinct added value, especially in terms of reaching the most vulnerable: (a) support of the Government so as to ensure strategic coordination of assistance provided by all stakeholders, (b) technical advice and capacity support, (c) material and financial support and (d) advocacy on humanitarian needs and the rights of flood-affected people.

Critical humanitarian challenges and responses

25. Considering the multitude of challenges, not least of which is the unprecedented scale of the disaster, there are achievements of the Government of Pakistan and the international community that are worth recording: the death toll was relatively small for such a large-scale disaster; there was no major disease outbreak recorded, thanks to the immediate response to the health needs of the affected population; and the food chain was not broken and was thus able to cater for millions of affected people's needs.

26. A lack of sufficient human resources to carry out coordination and information management functions hampered the response, especially at subnational levels. Capacity varied significantly across districts as well as provinces, with areas that had recent experience in coordinating humanitarian responses (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) faring relatively better. As the disaster progressed south, human resources with previous experience were moved to Punjab and Sindh.

27. Affected regions differ in respect of population densities, poverty levels and presence of international and national non-governmental organizations. The 2005 earthquake emergency had developed the emergency relief capacities of the non-governmental organizations of northern Pakistan. Nevertheless, owing to security reasons, there is a low presence of international non-governmental organizations in the region. In the south, the opposite is the case: there is a wide presence of international non-governmental organizations, while national non-governmental organizations have a low field presence and, though experienced in development programmes, have virtually no emergency response experience. These factors in combination generate resources allocation bottlenecks in both the southern and the northern parts of the country.

28. Faced with immense needs spread out across the whole country, humanitarian agencies struggled to identify sufficient human resources, especially technical experts, capable of linking up quickly and effectively with local capacities already on the ground. This was particularly the case in the provinces of Punjab and Sindh (where the vast majority of humanitarian actors had neither a significant presence nor established partnerships prior to the floods) and in Balochistan (where problems of access and security have made it difficult to scale up as rapidly as was required).

29. Drawing on the lessons learned from past humanitarian responses (especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas), the Humanitarian Country Team expanded its assistance to the Government by providing strategic and capacity support for coordination at district, provincial and federal levels to all stakeholders involved in the humanitarian response, including civilian and military authorities, civil society and the private sector. Specifically,

humanitarian agencies focused on identifying local and national civil society networks or organizations and strengthening their response capacity through technical support (including information management) and material or financial inputs.

30. Relief targeting is also related to the size of the disaster. Government data on losses and damages, by district and province, and the list of severely affected districts prioritized by the Government, as well as initial vulnerability assessments, provided a foundation for ensuring provincial equity by focusing the humanitarian community's efforts on the most severely affected areas and communities. In addition, the inter-agency survival strategy allowed humanitarian organizations to produce analyses, updated daily, derived from the field-based surveillance mechanism so as to identify high-risk communities and ensure that assistance delivery would be evidence-based and distributions appropriately targeted.

31. The lack of availability of certain relief items significantly slowed down efforts in a number of sectors, including shelter, water/sanitation and hygiene, and nutrition. A limited production capacity in national and local markets combined with global shortages of certain materials (related in part to the high demand for relief goods in Haiti) led to significant delays in the sourcing of key relief items such as tents, tarpaulins, water bladders, water purification tablets and nutritional supplements. In addition, access to certain areas and beneficiaries has been hampered owing to logistic challenges such as damaged infrastructure. Delays in adopting emergency procurement procedures also slowed down a few actors. In light of the clearly identified gaps in global and national supply chains, the clusters responded to pipeline problems, adapting their response strategies by developing innovative and situation-specific solutions for responding at scale, with local procurement remaining the preferred option, so as to ensure that relief items reached target beneficiaries as quickly as possible.

32. For example, in the shelter sector, damage to housing has been one of the greatest challenges for the humanitarian community. The extent of housing damage is usually the primary indicator of areas in most need of assistance; however, as limited funds and limited capacity to implement programmes increase the importance of accurately directed assistance, additional targeting indicators, including social coping capacity, have been developed in order to refine vulnerability targeting. The proportion of houses that are destroyed within a community provides a more accurate measure of that community's potential to cope and recover than just total damage numbers; hence, it constitutes a better indicator of where assistance should be directed.

33. An initial lack of dedicated information management capacity in some clusters led to missed opportunities for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the humanitarian response. Data collection and analysis were hampered by the lack of uniform and standardized reporting formats, especially at the local and provincial levels, and by a lack of clearly defined roles and responsibilities relating to data reporting and sharing. These initial problems were addressed by deploying more than 50 information management specialists in Islamabad and provincial coordination hubs in the 12 clusters. Support to the information management capacity of the National Disaster Management Authority and the Provincial Disaster Management Authorities was scaled up. The Single Reporting Format (SRF), a joint venture between the Authority and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian

Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat — Pakistan, is a web-based monitoring tool for interventions and commodity deliveries developed during this emergency. All data entered into the system are made available to the entire humanitarian community in order to help ensure transparency, accountability and aid effectiveness.

34. The gradual evolution of the floods, which had still been causing new devastation and swallowing up whole villages seven weeks into the response, challenged the humanitarian community's ability to respond with rescue, relief and early recovery activities simultaneously in different parts of the country. This also led to a situation where some areas in Khyber Pakthunkhwa were comparatively better served than others, as humanitarian actors focused their initial attention on those areas that had first emerged as severely affected. With the additional human resources deployed, the provinces of Punjab and Sindh were also better served.

35. The effects of the floods in Pakistan were compounded by underlying vulnerabilities, including pre-existing humanitarian needs (those of internally displaced persons and refugees in the north-west), widespread poverty and structural challenges, as noted before. In addition, while in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa the cluster system had been previously rolled out and the Provincial Disaster Management Authority developed, this was not yet the case for Punjab and Sindh, where the humanitarian community and the provincial government had to start from scratch in terms of putting systems of coordination and assistance delivery in place for the flood response.

Gender considerations

36. The National Database and Registration Authority database of flood-affected people has revealed that 8-9 per cent of women had been registered as heads of family. There are also variations in the sociocultural context in the flood-affected regions, which adds to the complexity of the response. The preliminary gender needs assessment report of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) indicated that women might go unnoticed in the compensation process, as their economic contribution is usually not as visible. While women's health is vital to the well-being of their families, after disasters they tend, as traditional caregivers, to place their needs last. In certain provinces and in the absence of female health service providers, cultural norms such as purdah (strict separation of men and women) limit the ability of women to articulate their needs, even after the floods have forced women into camps and the public space.

37. On a positive note, the floods have provided an opportunity for women to participate in and demonstrate their contribution to humanitarian action. Application of gender markers to the Pakistan Floods Relief and Early Recovery Response Plan has strengthened strategic gender practice, and almost 40 per cent of projects developed in different clusters were identified as having contributed significantly to the promotion of gender equality. Financing analysis has demonstrated that these gender-sensitive projects have received priority attention and funding from donors.

C. Early recovery and reconstruction

38. Underlying structural and development issues, including malnutrition, surfaced as a result of the floods, which also drew more attention to some of the most

underdeveloped areas of the country. There have been some positive outcomes because of the aid efforts in response to the floods: access to education became a reality for the first time for thousands of children in camps, and many more people (including a large number of women) were issued identity cards, which allow access to the Government's cash card system.

39. The National Disaster Management Authority identified the following six sectors as priorities for the early recovery response: on/off-farm livelihoods, community infrastructure restoration, education, health, shelter and governance restoration.

40. The need to start up early recovery activities was immediate after the disaster, in order to ensure that people's lives saved through the relief assistance could be sustained and that spontaneous recovery efforts at community level could be supported until such time as the medium-term reconstruction and recovery efforts had begun taking effect. This approach will not only facilitate the swift transition to full reconstruction and recovery, but also potentially shorten the dependence on relief assistance. Early recovery is key to providing a bridging plan for restitution for the millions affected by the floods. The nature of this disaster has created a situation where the Government and the humanitarian community have had to engage in rescue, relief and early recovery simultaneously across different geographical areas. Moreover, the floods will almost certainly have an impact on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals unless coordinated action is taken in time for rehabilitation.

41. While in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab activities have moved towards recovery and reconstruction, in Sindh and some parts of Balochistan, the displacement and return patterns remain complex. Over 130,000 people remain in camps, while rehabilitation and reconstruction work has started in other parts. Many affected areas are facing a situation where humanitarian, early recovery, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development activities all continue at the same time, sometimes even in the same district.

42. As of 31 January 2011, work was under way on one-room and transitional shelters for 180,000 families. Further, 435 schools had been repaired, at least 600,000 households had received crop and vegetable packages, approximately 310,000 households were in the process of receiving livestock packages and 227,000 households were receiving emergency livelihood support (cash for work in agriculture, crop seeds packages, vegetable packages and tools).

43. Preliminary analysis of results from the recent joint WFP/FAO Flood Recovery Assessment (supported by UNIFEM and Oxfam) suggests that in the aftermath of the floods, affected districts in Sindh became home to the highest number of food-insecure at more than 2.4 million people, followed by Punjab (1.8 million), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (1.2 million) and Balochistan (more than 300,000 people). It is estimated that close to 3 million of these people were rendered food-insecure as a direct result of the floods, of which the vast majority had been in farming households. According to the same report, a significant shift in livelihoods occurred following the floods, with a high proportion of farmers turning to unskilled labour to earn an income. As nearly 50 per cent of cropland in Sindh was still flooded at the time of the survey, roughly 1 in 4 farmers were relying on unskilled work to support their families.

44. The results of the recently concluded Flood Affected Nutrition Survey reveal global acute malnutrition rates in Sindh that are far in excess of the critical emergency nutrition threshold of 15 per cent. The rate for the northern part of the province was 22.9 per cent, while the rate in the southern part was 21.2 per cent. The Pakistan Integrated Nutrition Strategy, which has been launched as a collaborative effort of five clusters (nutrition, food, agriculture, water/sanitation and hygiene, and health), aims at addressing the relief/recovery/development needs of the vulnerable populations.

45. In 15 of the most severely flood-affected districts in Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in which high levels of food insecurity were already observed prior to the disaster, the provision of food-based early recovery assistance has been scaled up. Specific activities include conditional food and cash for work to improve livelihoods and income-generating potential, school feeding to improve learning opportunities, and nutritional support for vulnerable women and young children. As of 31 January 2011, 1.2 million people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Sindh benefited from food for work and 3,000 families benefited from pilot cash transfer in Punjab. Another project is the Food Voucher Programme (in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Sindh), which has reached over 64,000 families. The Programme had begun in early August 2010 and was completed at the end of February 2011.

46. In line with the recently completed Flood Recovery Assessment, 3 million food-insecure beneficiaries will be targeted until July 2011 through livelihood support, school feeding and nutrition interventions for children under age 5 and pregnant and lactating women. Emergency food distribution will continue in the four districts of Sindh and the one in Balochistan where relief is still required.

47. Over 12,000 skilled and unskilled persons have received funds through projects to restore culverts, repair pavements and streets, strengthen flood protection structures and improve drainage systems. Cash for work has also been implemented in the Nowshera district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; and a total of 656 small businesses have been reactivated through microgrants.

48. The need to utilize self-recovery rates as a targeting indicator has been one of the lessons learned in this emergency. In the early recovery phase, it is important to take measures to gauge rates of self-recovery and from these to determine what factors have the greatest impact on self-recovery. For example, the early recovery activities of the shelter cluster indicate that the inclusion of disaster risk reduction actions in self-recovery activities should be encouraged. This approach will increase beneficiary preparedness for future emergencies.

49. In January 2011, the Government of Pakistan had decided to shift the focus from relief to recovery and declared the relief phase of the response plan to be at an end. The Government announced that relief activities would continue in four districts of Sindh and one district of Balochistan until end of March 2011. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and UNDP are working in synergy to enable a smooth transition and undertook a joint mission to develop a strategy in coordination with the Government. As it is important that the efforts to meet residual humanitarian requirements be incorporated in longer-term recovery activities, the members of the United Nations system are working together to ensure this.

50. An inter-agency real-time evaluation of the flood response was carried out in January and February 2011. Its recommendations will help the humanitarian community incorporate key lessons learned into its future disaster response efforts.

D. Disaster risk reduction and preparedness

51. Pakistan is at risk of various types of natural disasters of which cyclones, flooding, landslides, earthquakes and drought are the most common. The floods of 1950, 1988, 1992 and 1998 resulted in a large number of deaths and severe loss of property, while the July 2010 floods have been described as the worst in the last 80 years. The country's seismic risk vulnerability was proved in October 2005 when a major earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale hit nine districts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly known as the North-West Frontier Province) and Jammu and Kashmir, killing over 73,000 people and damaging or destroying about 450,000 houses. The droughts of 2000-2002 and 14 cyclones recorded in the period 1971-2001 caused a significant amount of damage. Climate change is considered a critical factor with respect to changing rainfall patterns and the visible increase in precipitation during monsoon seasons in parts of the country. Research work based on long-term climate change data points towards a scenario of future occurrences of heavy rainfall events during the monsoon season over north-west rather than north-east Pakistan. As a result, areas along the western rivers of the country (Indus and Kabul) will be more vulnerable to flood episodes similar to those experienced during the 2010 season. Contingency planning for the next monsoon season starting in July, coordinated by the National Disaster Management Authority and the United Nations, is under way.

52. The National Disaster Management Commission has been established under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister as the highest policymaking body in Pakistan in the field of disaster management. As an executive arm of the Commission, the National Disaster Management Authority is mandated to coordinate and monitor implementation of national policies and strategies on disaster management.

53. The United Nations, through the One UN Disaster Risk Management Programme, has continued to provide technical support to the National Disaster Management Authority in establishing and strengthening policy, legal and institutional arrangements for disaster risk management. Disaster risk reduction needs to be streamlined in development planning, and disaster management capacity-building at the district level is required. One of the key components of United Nations support has been directed towards advocacy and capacity-building by the Government with respect to mainstreaming disaster risk reduction across development planning in key ministries. Drawing from the lessons learned from the floods, the Government acknowledged the need for the projects approved by the Planning Commission to incorporate disaster risk reduction as an integral part of the project cycle system. Hence, disaster risk reduction checklists have been adopted by the Planning Commission to ensure that the dimensions of disaster risk reduction are given due attention in the future.